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AI Receptionists: Driving the Next Wave of Unified Communications Growth

How AI Receptionists Extend the Value of UC and Drive New Revenue Opportunities for Partners

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ZULTYS

Introduction

The Unified Communications (UC) purchasing cycle has fundamentally changed, with AI reshaping buyer expectations. According to a recent Metrigy report, organizations are no longer evaluating providers based solely on dial tone, instead prioritizing AI capabilities, seamless contact center integration, and richer collaboration experiences. [1]

AI receptionists have emerged as one of the fastest ways to enhance the value of UC. Powered by advances in natural language processing (NLP), generative AI and speech recognition, today's AI receptionists go far beyond traditional automated attendants. They can understand customer intent, engage callers in natural conversations, and integrate with business systems to provide immediate value.

Just as the technology has evolved, so have customer expectations. Gartner expects that by 2028, at least 70 percent of customers will use a conversational AI interface to start their customer service journey.[2] As AI receptionists become more prevalent, customers are increasingly viewing AI as a convenient and effective way to resolve routine requests, paving the way for broader adoption across customer-facing communications.

For technology advisors, this shift creates a significant revenue opportunity as demand for AI-powered voice experiences converges with increased investment in UC. According to Astute Analytica, the voice assistant market is on pace to reach $59.9 billion by 2033, driven by growing enterprise and consumer adoption.[3] At the same time, Metrigy reports that nearly 65 percent of organizations plan to increase UC spending in 2026, with additional budget growth expected in 2027.

Read Ahead to Discover

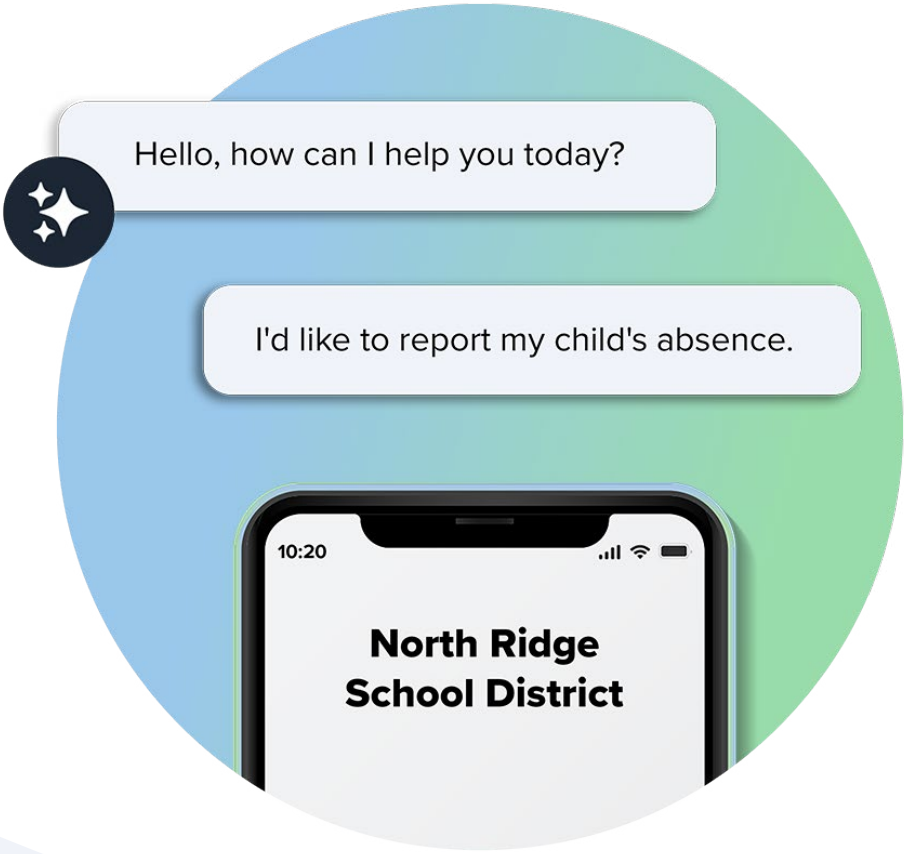
- **An Introduction to AI Receptionists and How They Work**
- **The Business Case for AI Receptionists and the Value They Deliver**
- **Example Use Cases: HVAC & Plumbing Providers and Orthopedic Surgery Clinics**
- **How Zultys AI Receptionist Creates a Competitive Advantage**

What Is an AI Receptionist?

An AI receptionist is an intelligent virtual assistant that uses conversational AI to answer and route calls, understand customer intent, and automate customer interactions.

Unlike traditional auto attendants that rely on rigid menu trees and predefined commands, AI receptionists engage callers through natural conversation. They can answer common questions and guide customers to the resources or personnel they need without requiring callers to navigate complex menus.

Beyond answering calls, AI receptionists also automate routine business processes such as scheduling appointments, looking up account information, capturing caller details, and initiating workflows through integrations with business applications.



Making the Business Case for AI Receptionists

When approaching clients about AI receptionists—or any AI technology—it's important to demonstrate measurable business value. Organizations today are placing AI investments under greater scrutiny, making measurable ROI a critical factor in purchasing decisions.

Deloitte's 2026 *State of AI in the Enterprise* report revealed that organizations are now seeing widespread gains in productivity and efficiency through AI, while benefits such as revenue growth, enhanced customer relationships, and improved decision-making are taking longer to materialize.[4]

AI Benefits Achieving Today vs. Hope to Achieve		
AI Benefit	**Achieving Today**	**Hope to Achieve**
Improve efficiency and productivity	66%	60%
Enhance decision-making and data-driven insights	53%	61%
Reduce costs	40%	65%
Enhance client/customer relationships	38%	60%
Improve products/ services and foster innovation	38%	60%
Increase revenue	20%	74%
Other	1%	2%

Table 1: With regards to benefits from your AI efforts: Which benefits are you achieving today? Which benefits do you hope to achieve? Source: Deloitte.

Compared to many AI initiatives, AI receptionists can deliver improvements in customer experience and operational efficiency within a relatively short timeline. For technology advisors, they offer an opportunity to achieve quick customer wins while building confidence in AI. AI receptionists are often an organization's first AI success story because they directly impact the customer experience, require limited organizational change, and produce measurable results.

AI receptionists can provide the following benefits:

- **Accelerate issue resolution** through voice-self-service, enabling customers to resolve routine inquiries without waiting for live agents.
- **Reduce dropped or abandoned calls** by ensuring every call is answered, even during peak call periods.
- **Lower operating costs** by automating routine customer inquiries without live agent intervention.
- **Provide 24/7/365 availability** with always-on support.
- **Support multilingual interactions** to better serve diverse and global customer bases.
- **Scale call handling without additional staffing,** allowing organizations to manage higher call volumes while maintaining service quality.

Key Takeaway: *Because AI receptionists often serve as the point of contact, they play a critical role in shaping the customer experience. By reducing friction at the outset of the customer journey, organizations can ensure positive first impressions and reduce the risk of early customer churn.*

Where AI Receptionists Offer the Greatest Value

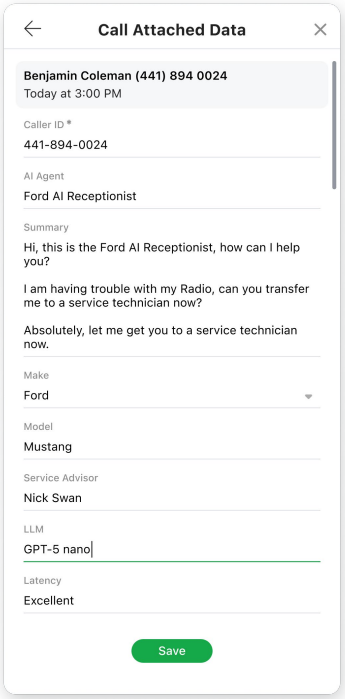
AI receptionists are well suited for organizations of all sizes, from small businesses to large enterprises. Some of the most significant transformations, however, are taking place in SMBs and mid-market organizations, where AI voice receptionists are handling inbound calls, following up with leads, and providing around-the-clock support. By automating these routine interactions, smaller organizations can deliver enterprise-grade customer experiences—in some cases, handling hundreds of inbound calls per day—and leveraging separate AI receptionists for different inbound department calls.

These solutions provide the greatest value in organizations that:

- Receive predictable, repetitive inbound calls (e.g., hours, directions, FAQs)
- Operate outside standard business hours
- Manage multiple locations and require a unified receptionist
- Operate lean, cost-conscious operations
- Serve multilingual customer bases

Zultys AI Receptionist: Enterprise-Grade AI for Answering Questions and Routing Calls

Zultys AI Receptionist is an intelligent voice agent that seamlessly integrates with the Zultys UC platform to enable natural, conversational interactions for inbound callers and to route calls with Call Attached Data (CAD) so live agents can provide a better customer experience with context. Regardless of customer size, Zultys' AI-powered voice agent acts like a front desk receptionist service where responses are delivered via source-restricted answers and only drawn from the company's curated knowledge base.



Zultys AI Receptionist enables system administrators to define what information the AI can access, which roles can use it, and how it responds, allowing organizations to enforce security policies and compliance requirements while maintaining operational flexibility.

To prevent the AI from giving incorrect or made-up answers, Zultys AI Receptionist only uses information from approved, trusted data sources. If it doesn't have the right information, it can transfer the caller to a live expert instead of guessing. By leveraging Zultys AI Receptionist, organizations across all verticals can provide a more consistent, professional front desk experience that's available 24/7/365, delivering AI they can trust.

Key Capabilities

Configurable deployments:
The service is built around each organization's call flows, departments, staff directory, business hours, and compliance requirements. It can also integrate with CRM, ERP, calendars, scheduling, payment, inventory and other business systems to support real-time data access and workflow automation. Clearly defined knowledge boundaries and scripted fallback responses help ensure consistent, reliable customer interactions.

DTMF recognition:
In addition to supporting natural voice interactions, Zultys AI Receptionist includes Dual-Tone Multi-Frequency (DTMF) digit detection and routing. DTMF recognition is configurable based on each customer's preferences and system design, enabling callers to bypass AI conversations when needed, such as by pressing 0 to reach a live operator, or to navigate menu options by pressing designated digits.



Contextual intelligence:
When Zultys AI Receptionist transfers a call to a live agent, it can provide CAD containing a conversation summary, sentiment analysis, CSAT score, and call quality score. As a result, agents immediately receive the context they need, including the caller's identity, reason for the call and key details for the interaction, improving each customer engagement.

Multi-language support:
Zultys AI Receptionist supports up to 10 languages with automatic detection and switching during conversations. This allows callers to interact in their preferred language without navigating menus, creating a frictionless experience.

Platform-agnostic design:
Zultys AI Receptionist integrates with existing communications environments, enabling organizations to deploy AI-powered call handling without replacing their current UC platform.

HIPAA compliant:
Zultys AI Receptionist can be configured to meet HIPAA-compliant requirements, enabling healthcare organizations to deploy AI-powered call handling while helping ensure secure patient communications.

Centralized insights:
System admins and contact center supervisors with access to the Zultys AI Receptionist backend tool can access call recordings, transcripts, and sentiment analysis through a single, user-friendly interface for simplified reporting and analysis.

Example Use Cases

Organizations across industries are finding new ways to leverage Zultys AI Receptionist to improve customer experience and operational efficiency. Industries with strong AI receptionist potential include automotive, healthcare, education, local government, property management, home services, insurance, legal, and multi-location retail.

The following examples highlight two recent success stories.

HVAC and Plumbing Provider

A growing HVAC and plumbing business with 13 locations needed to improve the customer experience without disrupting existing operations. Staff were frequently pulled away from in-store customers to handle inbound calls with routine questions.

The customer implemented Zultys AI Receptionist to automate high-volume, repetitive inquiries. Customers can now receive real-time answers, place and check orders, schedule pickups, and be routed to the appropriate location without staff intervention. The business improved operational efficiency, while delivering faster, more consistent service across all locations.

Orthopedic Surgery Clinic

A healthcare clinic wanted to migrate from its premise-based communications system to the cloud without sacrificing reliability or functionality. At the same time, the organization sought to enhance patient experience by introducing AI-powered capabilities.

The clinic migrated to Zultys Cloud Services, deployed 23 new Zultys IP desktop phones, and implemented Zultys AI Receptionist with plans to automate appointment scheduling. The practice is now able to automate routine scheduling tasks, while freeing staff to focus on delivering exceptional patient care.

Questions to Start Effective Conversations Around AI Receptionists

Many organizations today are open to exploring AI receptionists as they look to improve customer service, reduce administrative workloads, and extend business hours.

However, successful conversations typically begin with business outcomes—not technology alone. Rather than leading with AI receptionist features and capabilities, technology advisors should focus on uncovering operational challenges, such as the need for 24/7 support without the staff to cover after-hours calls, or opportunities to improve the customer experience by providing a consistent, standardized front-line experience across multiple locations.

The discovery questions below will help uncover pain points and demonstrate value.

CRM & Customer Context

Discovery angle: Identifies opportunities for caller identification, screen-pop context, and CAD handoff at transfer.

- "When a customer calls in, what does your team have to do to figure out who they are and why they're calling?"
- "If the AI receptionist already knew who was calling and why, what would that change about how your team handles the call?"

Operational Efficiency

Discovery angle: Reveals repetitive call types that can be fully automated without requiring staff intervention.

- "What kinds of calls are your team members spending the most time on that don't actually require a person to handle?"
- "If you could take one category of calls completely off your team's plate, what would it be?"

Order and Customer Status Inquiries

Discovery angle: Positions AI receptionist as the “lookup” layer, integrating with POS, dispatch, ERP, or EHS systems for real-time answers.

- "When customers call to check on an order, a reservation, or an account, are your people having to look that up manually every time?"
- "Is there information your staff is reading back to callers that could just be answered automatically?"

Appointment Scheduling

Discovery angle: Exposes scheduling volume and friction, and opens AI receptionist as an intake/booking layer with calendar or EHR integration.

- "How does a new patient or customer go from calling you to actually being on your schedule?"
- "What percentage of your inbound calls are appointment-related, meaning scheduling, confirming, or canceling?"

Complex Call Routing

Discovery angle: Surfaces routing complexity, directory depth, and the need for AI to differentiate caller types before a human touches the call.

- "When a parent calls the school, what does that call actually look like? Who answers, what do they need, and where does it go?"
- "Are there categories of callers, such as parents, students, or vendors, who should be handled differently the moment they call in?"

Reporting and Compliance

Discovery angle: Positions AI receptionist as both a data-collection layer (call intent logging, lead capture) and a compliance guardrail (consistent deflection of restricted topics).

- "Do you know what your top five call reasons are right now, and is that based on actual data or best guesses?"
- "Are there things your team is legally or operationally required to say or not say on certain calls, and how do you enforce that today?"

Customer Experience and Self-Service

Discovery angle: Drives after-hours coverage, self-service deflection, and the "always-on receptionist" value prop, which is the clearest AI receptionist entry point.

- "Are customers ever frustrated that they have to wait for a person to answer something they probably could have gotten instantly?"
- "If a caller could get what they needed at eleven at night without leaving a voicemail, how much business would that recover for you?"

Zultys AI Receptionist: Modernizing Customer Experience

Zultys AI Receptionist is transforming how organizations engage with customers, with purpose-built AI that reduces risk and enables AI adoption at the most critical customer touchpoint.

As a 100 percent channel-focused company, Zultys is committed to helping technology advisors deliver cutting-edge communications solutions that solve real business challenges and increase average deal value by expanding conversations beyond telephony.

To learn more about Zultys AI Receptionist, request a demo or call 888-985-8971.

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ABOUT ZULTYS

Zultys provides a secure, reliable Unified Communications and Integrated Contact Center platform that streamlines communication and increases productivity for businesses of all sizes. Our easy button connects users to 100% US-based support with most calls answered on the first ring and a low 0.7% churn rate. Unlock more sales opportunities by offering both UCaaS and Zultys' new Hardware as a Service deployment type — with multiple business continuity options. With a single solution regardless of deployment type, it's easy to sell and easy to use. Zultys delivers peace of mind for you and your customers.

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